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County prosecutors charge Navy reserve veteran with HATE CRIME for decapitating Iowa Satanic statue

02/05/2024 // Belle Carter // **780** Views



Tags: Baphomet, beheaded, civil disobedience, criminal mischief, decapitated, demonic times, evil, faith, felony, freedom of expression, fundraiser, God's wrath, hate crime, Iowa Capitol, legal defense, Michael Cassidy, misdemeanor, non-violent, religion, satanic statue, Satanic Temple, Twisted, violation of individual rights



Polk County prosecutors charged a former U.S. Navy fighter and instructor pilot with a "hate crime" after he pushed over and [beheaded the horned deity Baphomet](#) monument in the Iowa Capitol on Dec. 14. He then discarded the head of the statue in the trash.

Michael Cassidy was charged with a misdemeanor fourth-degree criminal mischief the day after the decapitation, but had been informed that he may be liable for further charges. Most recently, he was accused of a more serious offense – felony third-degree criminal mischief. It was also noted that the act was committed "in violation of individual rights" under Iowa's hate crime statute.

As per Polk County Attorney's Office representative Lynn Hicks, the "evidence shows the defendant made statements to law enforcement and the public indicating he destroyed the property because of the victim's religion" – resulting in the hate crimes charge.

According to Hicks, the cost to replace the statue of Baphomet crafted by the Satanic Temple would be between \$750 and \$1,500. The non-theistic religious organization had filed its own damage estimate, saying that it would be \$3,000 to replace the statue.

"My conscience is held captive to the word of God, not to bureaucratic decree. And so I acted," Cassidy who claimed he was committing an act of "Christian civil disobedience," said at the time. As of press time, he has already [raised \\$114,529](#) for his legal defense on a



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GiveSendGo fundraising campaign. He said that people need to wake up to what is happening in the world: "They may think it's a joke that they triggered us, but the devil is real and we have to be ready."

R. David Younts, one of Cassidy's lawyers, told *Fox News Digital* that he hopes the District Attorney's office will [dismiss the charge](#) against his client. "It is deeply disappointing that my client is being targeted with this type of charge," Younts said "His non-violent actions were motivated by his sincere and deeply held religious faith. Nothing he did was targeted at any specific individual or organization. I hope that as the [district attorney's] office carefully reviews the facts of this case they will dismiss the charge."

In court filings, another attorney from Cassidy's legal team, Sara Pasquale, pointed out that the Satanic Temple, which organized the pagan display, was intending to "evoke strong emotions and incite others." (Related: [Women's magazine gives detailed instructions for carrying out "satanic abortion ritual."](#))

The statue was part of a display organized by Iowa's Satanic Temple and allowed by the state during the holidays. The installation drew strong criticism from state and national leaders, including Gov. Kim Reynolds and Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis. In a statement following the destruction of the statue, Reynolds said she found the statue "absolutely objectionable," but that the best response to objectionable speech is more speech and prayer.

Court records show Cassidy is scheduled to be [arraigned on Feb. 15](#).

Cassidy slams critics for "over-complicating" situation, calls on people to stand firm against evil

The 35-year-old "vandalizer," who tore down the goat-headed figure used to represent Satan, has called out those who are defending the display under constitutional rights for ["over-complicating" the situation](#).

"People start over-complicating the truth, which is that God is great and should be honored, and the devil is evil and should not be honored," he told the *Christian Post*. "I think people are tying themselves in knots trying to justify it, and it's really a lot simpler than that."

Cassidy also revealed that he didn't immediately start ripping down the display. According to him, he first eyed the open doors near the statue and felt compelled to do something.

"I don't want to have the conversation with Jesus someday and have Him say, 'Hey, there was this statue, and you knew it was wrong for it to be up there, but you were afraid of worldly things and worldly consequences, and you were ashamed of me and my opposition to the devil,'" he argued.

Iowa State Rep. Jon Dunwell posted on X that although he personally finds the altar 'classified as evil,' he doesn't think it is the government's place to get involved.

"For me, I would rather have an evil, blasphemous display or no display at all than have the state dictate what they think is appropriate," Dunwel stated.

However, Cassidy stood firm that just because the Satanists ticked all the boxes to get their display into the Iowa State Capitol does not mean the statue deserved to be held equivalent to the Nativity scene or displayed on government property, especially during the Christmas season.

"The devil is evil, and we should not pretend or act as if he is equal to a Nativity scene," he said.

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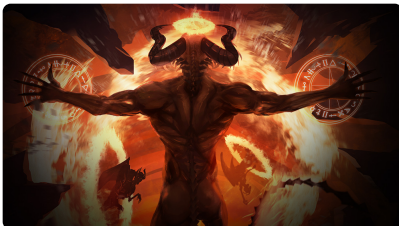
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